

The Jerusalem Post
WEATHER
High 22°C
Low 12°C
Tel Aviv 21°C

Make international connections
From Israel, just dial:
177-100-2727
AT&T

THE JERUSALEM POST

Israel's leading electronic daily
visited 247 news sites in the world
<http://www.jpost.co.il>
THE JERUSALEM POST
INTERNET EDITION
waiting for you

VOLUME LXV, NUMBER 19710 TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 1997 • AV 23, 5757 • 22 RABIA THANI 1418

Germany jails Egon Krenz
Page 5

First wild animal hospital opens
Page 4

Oasis ascends the throne of pop
Arts & Entertainment, Page 18

Index

- Arts & Entertainment18
- Business11
- Crossword19
- Movies/TV19
- Opinion8
- Sports14

Central Bank raises interest rates 0.7%

Jerusalem Post Staff and news agencies

Raising its key lending rates for the first time in 14 months, the Bank of Israel yesterday said it will lift the rate at which it lends to banks by 0.7 of a percentage point to 13.4 percent, effective Thursday.

The increase was above expectations and is likely to prompt declining share prices tomorrow, said analysts, who expected the central bank to lift rates 0.3 percent.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, on an official visit to Tokyo, was upset over the decision, Channel 2 reported last night.

Chambers of Commerce president

Danny Gillerman called the bank's decision "a slap in the face to the government and a blatant expression of no-confidence in its economic policy." Frenkel should resign, he asserted.

Manufacturers Association president Dan Propper said the rate hike would deepen the recession and increase unemployment, because it "shows a sick into the spokes of the government's economic policy."

This dooms the government's plans for a 5 percent growth rate, he added.

Contractors Association president Uri Dori predicted the rate hike would harm investment in the construction industry by making it harder to obtain credit.

Full report, Page 10

PM: Ross coming back Warns of Arafat's 'kiss of death'

By JAY BUSHINSKY and news agencies

TOKYO — Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat may have given the Middle East peace process "the kiss of death" when he embraced Hamas leader Abdul Aziz Rantisi, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu warned yesterday at the start of his working visit to Japan.

Netanyahu reiterated his commitment to the peace process, while at the same time asserting the PA has not met its obligations under the Oslo Accords.

Netanyahu said US envoy Dennis Ross intends to return to the Middle East to follow up on Palestinian promises to improve security ties with Israel.

"He [Ross] intends to return to check the extent of the fulfillment of Palestinian promises," Netanyahu said in remarks broadcast on Israel Radio.

State Department spokesman James

Rubin responded by saying there are no immediate plans for Ross to return to the region. He also told reporters that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright spoke with Netanyahu on Saturday, but has not yet decided when she will travel to the region.

Rubin said the visit would occur "very soon" and that prospects for its success would be aided if the Palestinian Authority provides Israel "additional information and cooperation" through the trilateral security apparatus established during Ross's trip earlier this month. Such a development would help shift the focus from security matters to "restoring the trust and confidence that's been so unfortunately lost," Rubin added.

Although Netanyahu has concentrated on economic issues and business opportunities in his talks with Japanese officials and industrialists, his public comments are often interspersed with political comments, especially with regard to

the PA.

The prime minister confirmed that the military aspect of the Middle East situation came up in yesterday's meeting with his Japanese counterpart, Ryutaro Hashimoto.

"He is interested in seeing stability in the Middle East," Netanyahu said. "I told him that the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip were a reaction to terrorism, not an act of punishment directed against the Palestinians."

One of the points stressed repeatedly by Netanyahu is that "peace and prosperity go together." At the same time, he stresses that peace and terrorism cannot coexist.

A senior Palestinian official said on Monday the PLO has told militant groups opposed to its peace deals with Israel that they must suspend violent attacks.



PM Binyamin Netanyahu meets Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto in Tokyo yesterday at the start of his four-day visit. (Reuters)



Rocky road to peace
Palestinian men pose yesterday with a boulder placed by the IDF to enforce the closure of the territories near Bethlehem. Residents tore down part of a barrier set up by soldiers near the town. See story, Page 2. (AP)

'Merge Japanese production with Israeli ingenuity'

By JAY BUSHINSKY

TOKYO — Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday called for a "merger" that would join Japan's manufacturing and marketing abilities with Israel's innovative high-tech industries, thus creating a "partnership" that would benefit both countries.

He noted that "speed and quality of innovation" — assets which Israel possesses in relative abundance — "are the best way to increase competitiveness, and the key to the 21st century."

Speaking at a packed meeting of the Keidanren Industrialists Association, Netanyahu urged his audience to look to Israel "for the outsourcing of research and development for your respective industries."

He also said he had delivered a message to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto from King Hussein and himself urging Japan to invest in a water purification and desalination project in Jordan.

"The region's population is grow-

ing geometrically, but the water supply is flat," the prime minister said.

The Prime Minister and Mrs. Netanyahu began their first full day in Japan by calling on Crown Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako at the royal palace. Their conversation, which was conducted in English, centered on the history and culture of Israel.

Next on Netanyahu's tight schedule was a meeting with Shoichiro Toyoda, one of Japan's leading industrialists and head of the Toyota company. Toyoda is also chairman of the economically influential Keidanren.

Netanyahu reminisced afterwards that the first jeep he drove in the IDF was made by Toyota, but well-informed Israeli officials did not confirm a report that a Toyota assembly plant will be erected near the Erez checkpoint to employ both Palestinians and Israelis.

Another recurrent theme in the Prime Minister's talks here is his desire to inaugurate direct El Al flights between Tel Aviv and Tokyo.

Netanyahu is anxious for them to start well in advance of the November 1998 economic conference due to take place in the context of the state's 50th anniversary.

Although Japan Air Lines has expressed no interest in launching a parallel service, Netanyahu believes the El Al link would not only bring a significant influx of Japanese tourists, but would also facilitate access to Israel by Japanese investors and prospective business partners.

Negotiations on the Tel Aviv-Tokyo air link are snagged on the security issue, particularly Israel's insistence on having its personnel involved in the pre-flight process, according to highly-placed sources.

The sources added that Japanese exporters want a bigger share of the Israeli market, and are complaining to the Prime Minister as well as to Finance Minister Yacov Neeman about customs and other tariff barriers which they deem discriminatory in comparison with those imposed on their Western European competitors.

Budapest possible site for Israeli-Syrian talks

By JAY BUSHINSKY, ARIEH O'SULLIVAN and news agencies

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday urged the Damascus regime to return to the negotiating table and praised it for helping wind down the latest escalation in Lebanon.

"The Syrians made an important contribution to this end," Netanyahu said in Tokyo, implying that Damascus was instrumental in discouraging the Iranian-backed Hizbullah from intensifying the sporadic hostilities in southern Lebanon.

"Israel and Syria worked to downplay the tension," he said at a packed news conference, adding that "peace will give Syria an opportunity to become more viable economically."

Israeli and Hungarian diplomats said yesterday they could neither confirm nor deny comments attributed to Foreign Ministry Director-

General Eitan Bentsur that Israel and Syria are considering holding a new round of peace talks in Budapest.

Bentsur was quoted by the Hungarian daily *Nepszabadsag* as saying he "cannot rule out that the Hungarian capital could be the venue for Syrian-Israeli consultations."

Bentsur, who was in Hungary over the weekend to prepare for a three-day official visit by Netanyahu on September 19, did not give further details.

An Israeli embassy spokeswoman said she could neither confirm nor deny that talks were planned.

A Hungarian foreign ministry spokesman said the Hungarian government had not received an official request to host talks from either Israel or Syria.

Yesterday, dozens of Israeli tanks and military vehicles took part in a training exercise in the central Golan Heights in full view of the Syrian army.

The force was part of the culminating exercise of the IDF's annual battalion and company commanders' course. Its commander, Brig-Gen. Y. said the exercise had no direct bearing on the Syrian moves.

Yemenite mother and child reunited after 49 years

Margalit Amosi, who lives in Petah Tikva, was told yesterday that genetic tests had determined that American citizen Tsila Levine is her biological daughter who went missing as a baby 49 years ago.

Amosi, like many Yemenite Jews who arrived in the late 1940s and early 1950s, had not known if her hospitalized baby had died or been adopted by childless Ashkenazi parents.

The news released the emotions which had been bottled up for nearly half a century, causing Levine and Amosi to burst into tears.

After waiting for the results of the tests for a week, Levine said: "Now we can cry and cry for joy."

"I feel like the lights have been turned on in my heart," Levine declared when attorney Rami Tsubari informed her of the test results from the Hebrew University, saying they were 99.9 percent conclusive.

"I've never stopped looking for her," Amosi said. "She was in my heart every day and every hour. Every Friday when I lit Shabbat candles, I remembered her."

"I feel blinded and really happy

that I did the trip this time and got results," said Levine, who lives in the US and has returned here several times to find her biological parents.

"I am happy for Margalit, who had to go through all this hardship, and I also feel it as a mother."

"God gave me a gift," Amosi added. "I want to see my new grandchildren, two boys aged 23 and 25. I want to see them all, and her husband. I haven't slept for three nights... Now everything will be easier for me."

Amosi met with Levine several days ago and they waited together for the test results.

It was the culmination of three years of hard work by Tsubari to discover the circumstances of Levine's adoption.

He published a photograph of Levine as a baby, and the Amosi family saw the resemblance to the child it had lost and made contact.

The Amosi's baby, only several weeks old, disappeared in 1948 after she was hospitalized. They were told she was "missing."



See BUDAPEST, Page 2

See YEMENITE, Page 2

The Lowest Price

USA NIS 0.71
FRANCE NIS 0.98
HOLLAND NIS 0.98

Dial as usual:

00 country code city code number

The price includes vat. All day

Lowest prices without restrictions, only through BEZEQ INTERNATIONAL.

ביזק בינלאומי
Bezeq International Ltd.

MISHTANIM LEADING STOCK MARKET ISSUES

Table of stock market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of stock market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of stock market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of stock market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of stock market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of stock market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of stock market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

KARAM ISRAELI CAPITALISATION MARKET ISSUES

Table of Israeli capitalisation market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of Israeli capitalisation market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of Israeli capitalisation market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of Israeli capitalisation market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of Israeli capitalisation market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of Israeli capitalisation market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Table of Israeli capitalisation market issues with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

ISRAELI SHARES IN NEW YORK

AMEX

Table of Israeli shares on AMEX with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

NASDAQ

Table of Israeli shares on NASDAQ with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

NYSE

Table of Israeli shares on NYSE with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

INTERNATIONAL SHARES NEW YORK

Table of international shares on NYSE with columns for stock name, price, and last change.

Major League Statistics (Through Friday's Games)

Wilson homer leads Mariners past Yankees

NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAM PITCHING table with columns for ERA, IP, H, ER, BB, SO, SV, and rows for various teams like Atlanta, Los Angeles, St. Louis, etc.

INDIVIDUAL PITCHING Based on 12 decisions table with columns for IP, H, ER, BB, SO, W, L, ERA and rows for pitchers like P.J. Martinez, Kile Hou, G.Hadfield, etc.

TEAM BATTING table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for teams like Boston, New York, Cleveland, Seattle, Anaheim, etc.

INDIVIDUAL BATTING Based on 300 plate appearances table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for players like Jefferey Bon, Thomas CW, Justin Ce, etc.

AMERICAN LEAGUE TEAM PITCHING table with columns for ERA, IP, H, ER, BB, SO, SV, and rows for teams like Baltimore, New York, Toronto, etc.

INDIVIDUAL PITCHING Based on 12 decisions table with columns for IP, H, ER, BB, SO, W, L, ERA and rows for pitchers like Clemens Tor, Rajahon Sea, Wlckman CW, etc.

AMERICAN LEAGUE TEAM BATTING table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for teams like Minnesota, Baltimore, Toronto, etc.

INDIVIDUAL BATTING Based on 300 plate appearances table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for players like Gwynn SD, D.Walker Cl, Lofton Ad, etc.



CAL COMES HOME - Baltimore Orioles' Cal Ripken slides home safely as Minnesota Twins' catcher Damian Miller tries in vain to get him out.

SEATTLE (AP) - Nothing brings out the best in the Seattle Mariners and their fans like a visit from the New York Yankees.

Dan Wilson's two-run homer in the seventh inning snatched a tie as the Mariners defeated the Yankees 5-3 to take two of three games in their weekend series.

A club-record 169,024 watched Seattle improve its record against New York in the Kingdom Sunday to 17-4 since the 1995 playoffs.

It felt like this game was so crucial," said rookie pitcher Ken Cloude, who combined with two relievers on a six-hitter. "It definitely had a different feeling out there."

Jay Buhner also homered for Seattle, which won Friday night 9-5 before New York took a wild 10-8 decision in 11 innings on Saturday night.

With the score tied 3-3, David Wells (14-7) walked Andy Sheets to open the seventh and Mike Blowers sacrificed. Wilson then hit a 1-2 pitch over the wall in left for his 12th homer.

The 22-year-old Cloude gave up four hits and three runs in 6 1/2 innings.

Orlones 5, Twins 1 Scott Kamieniecki pitched seven strong innings as host Baltimore completed a three-game sweep and Baltimore moved 39 games over .500 (83-44) for the first time since August 1979.

Geronimo Berroa had a two-run shot and Brady Anderson and Rafael Palmeiro hit solo homers off LaTroy Hawkins (4-9) as the Orioles won their fifth straight.

Baltimore, which leads second-place New York by seven games in the AL East, has won 22 of 25. Kamieniecki (9-5) allowed one run, four hits and a walk. He struck out eight, matching his career high, and improved to 3-0 in five starts since July 25.

NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAM BATTING table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for teams like Colorado, San Diego, Atlanta, etc.

INDIVIDUAL BATTING Based on 300 plate appearances table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for players like Gwynn SD, D.Walker Cl, Lofton Ad, etc.

AMERICAN LEAGUE TEAM PITCHING table with columns for ERA, IP, H, ER, BB, SO, SV, and rows for teams like Baltimore, New York, Toronto, etc.

INDIVIDUAL PITCHING Based on 12 decisions table with columns for IP, H, ER, BB, SO, W, L, ERA and rows for pitchers like Clemens Tor, Rajahon Sea, Wlckman CW, etc.

AMERICAN LEAGUE TEAM BATTING table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for teams like Minnesota, Baltimore, Toronto, etc.

INDIVIDUAL BATTING Based on 300 plate appearances table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for players like Gwynn SD, D.Walker Cl, Lofton Ad, etc.

starting lineup. Each had the day of the year and 23rd in 13 seasons in the majors.

Eduardo Perez hit a two-out, two-run double in the 10th for visiting Cincinnati, which won despite 17 strikeouts by five Atlanta pitchers.

The Reds took advantage of three errors to score four unearned runs.

Barry Larkin began the 10th with a pinch-hit single, and Chris Stynes reached on third baseman Chipper Jones' high throw.

Perez followed with a double against Chad Fox (0-1).

John Smoltz had a season-high 12 strikeouts for Atlanta, but didn't figure in the decision.

Astros 3, Rockies 1 Mike Hampton pitched a four-hitter and Derek Bell homered as the host Astros stayed three games ahead of second-place Pittsburgh in the NL Central.

Hampton (11-8) won for the eighth time in nine decisions.

Bell, 18-for-31 (.581) in his last seven games, also got an RBI with yesterday's AL games: Texas at Milwaukee; Detroit at Minnesota; Boston at Seattle.

Today's AL games: N.Y. Yankees (petite 14-7) at Oakland (Oquist 2-3); Kansas City (Rusch 5-9) at Baltimore (Key 14-7); Chicago White Sox (Baldwin 9-13) at Toronto (Person 5-9); Texas (Santana 3-5) at Milwaukee (Reed 11-2); Detroit (Thompson 11-9) at Minnesota (Roberson 7-11); Cleveland (Nagy 12-9) at Anaheim (Springer 8-6); Boston (Avery 6-4) at Seattle (Moeyer 13-4).

Today's NL games: San Diego (Hatchcock 9-7) at Philadelphia (Grace 0-0); Los Angeles (Park 12-6) at Pittsburgh (Silva 0-0); San Francisco (Alvarez 2-1) at N.Y. Mets (Reed 10-7); Houston (Reynolds 6-8) at Atlanta (Glavin 11-6); Florida (Henderson 7-9) at Chicago Cubs (Baiston 0-1); Montreal (Johnson 1-1) at St. Louis (Osborne 2-6); Cincinnati (Carrara 0-1) at Colorado (Bailey 10-10).

NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAM BATTING table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for teams like Colorado, San Diego, Atlanta, etc.

INDIVIDUAL BATTING Based on 300 plate appearances table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for players like Gwynn SD, D.Walker Cl, Lofton Ad, etc.

AMERICAN LEAGUE TEAM PITCHING table with columns for ERA, IP, H, ER, BB, SO, SV, and rows for teams like Baltimore, New York, Toronto, etc.

INDIVIDUAL PITCHING Based on 12 decisions table with columns for IP, H, ER, BB, SO, W, L, ERA and rows for pitchers like Clemens Tor, Rajahon Sea, Wlckman CW, etc.

AMERICAN LEAGUE TEAM BATTING table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for teams like Minnesota, Baltimore, Toronto, etc.

INDIVIDUAL BATTING Based on 300 plate appearances table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for players like Gwynn SD, D.Walker Cl, Lofton Ad, etc.

Mercedes pitched a four-hitter for his first major league shutout.

Jerome Burnitz, Mark Loretta and Jeff Cirillo each hit solo homers as Phil Garner became the winningest manager in Brewers history.

Garner has 423 wins, one more than Tom Trebelhorn (422-397, 1986-1991).

Mercedes (6-7) struck out five and walked one for his second complete game this season.

Willie Blair (13-6) allowed five runs and eight hits in 5 1/2 innings.

White Sox 3, Rangers 1 Ozzie Guillen hit a two-run homer in the seventh inning to help visiting Chicago end a five-game losing streak against Texas.

NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAM BATTING table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for teams like Colorado, San Diego, Atlanta, etc.

INDIVIDUAL BATTING Based on 300 plate appearances table with columns for AB, R, H, HR, RBI, Avg and rows for players like Gwynn SD, D.Walker Cl, Lofton Ad, etc.

AMERICAN LEAGUE TEAM PITCHING table with columns for ERA, IP, H, ER, BB, SO, SV, and rows for teams like Baltimore, New York, Toronto, etc.

INDIVIDUAL PITCHING Based on 12 decisions table with columns for IP, H, ER, BB, SO, W, L, ERA and rows for pitchers like Clemens Tor, Rajahon Sea, Wlckman CW, etc.

AMERICAN LEAGUE table with columns for W, L, Pct, GB, L10, St, Home, Away, Infr and rows for teams like Baltimore, New York, Cleveland, etc.

Mevasseret Zion squatters evicted

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN, JOE CHARLAFF and Nim

Police and border police yesterday removed homeless families who had occupied 114 apartments at the Mevasseret Zion absorption center near Jerusalem, arresting 12 people in the process.

After being briefed Sunday night, approximately 1,000 policemen and border policemen gathered at Jerusalem's Teddy Stadium before proceeding to Mevasseret Zion.

The highly organized operation began at about 9:30 in the morning, when some of the families were still sleeping, and many of the men had already left for work.

Bosmat Abarjel, 19, a mother of a week-old baby and whose husband was in hospital, said the police entered while she was sleeping and broke her television set. When her mother-in-law tried to make her some coffee, she found the police had already turned off the gas.

Dudu Meru, 32, said: "We're going directly from the apartments to the sidewalks. We broke in here because we have no place else to go, so we're putting our stuff right here on the sidewalk. Then we plan to break into schools that have been prepared for the opening of the school year, so that at least we have a roof over our heads."

He added: "I woke up and heard police cars, helicopters, horses and loud walkie-talkies.

We got very scared. The police broke down the door without knocking. The last time they came, they announced it on a loudspeaker. This time they came with horses and knocked the doors down, grabbed us and took us outside by force."

Many of the squatters complained that police did not even give them time to get dressed, and forcibly removed them. Many of the women and children were in nightgowns or pajamas.

A number managed to remove their possessions before the police arrived. Some took their belongings to the homes of their parents who live nearby, while others were still on the street.

The homeless originally took over the apartments in mid-June and were evicted on July 3, but later returned to the center.

A police spokesman said no violence was encountered and the squatters were being brought in to the local police station for questioning.

An official at the Mevasseret Zion local council said the council was not involved in the evacuation, and had been trying to find a solution for the problem.

A Jewish Agency spokesman noted that the High Court of Justice is to hear a petition today from the agency about the failure to evacuate the squatters.

The spokesman said that while the agency is sympathetic with the plight of the homeless, their situation could not be resolved by breaking into places intended for new immigrants.



Border policemen cut the window bars of an apartment occupied by squatters in Mevasseret Zion yesterday. (Brian Hender)

"The solving of the nation's social problems cannot come at the expense of the absorption of immigrants, who are an important element in the strength of Israel," the spokesman said.

He said many of the squatters were not homeless at all. The spokesman praised the police

efforts, but added that the Jewish Agency was sorry no fitting solution had been found for the homeless among the squatters, either by the local council or other bodies.

WEATHER

Gotan 16-22

Haifa 23-29

Tiberias 23-33

Afula 20-30

Samaria 19-28

Tel Aviv 23-28

Jerusalem 17-24

Beer Sheva 23-30

Dead Sea 26-36

Eilat 25-36

Forecast: Partly cloudy
Drop in temperatures
Unseasonably cool

Amsterdam	19	06	28	82	cloudy
Berlin	18	04	31	88	partly cloudy
Buenos Aires	08	46	18	95	clear
Chicago	23	23	26	79	partly cloudy
Copenhagen	16	01	28	79	cloudy
Fairfax	20	09	24	75	partly cloudy
Geneva	17	03	31	88	clear
Helsinki	18	04	23	73	rain
Hong Kong	28	29	30	86	cloudy
Johannesburg	06	43	23	73	clear
Labron	18	01	27	81	partly cloudy
London	18	04	22	72	rain
Los Angeles	20	09	31	88	clear
Madrid	18	04	22	72	rain
Moscow	13	05	24	75	clear
Munich	14	07	27	81	clear
New York	21	08	28	82	partly cloudy
Rome	18	04	28	82	partly cloudy
Stockholm	16	01	26	77	cloudy
Sydney	07	45	17	63	clear
Tokyo	24	29	28	82	cloudy
Toronto	15	03	28	82	clear
Varna	17	03	29	84	clear
Zurich	17	03	31	88	clear

Golden Lines Subscribers Exclusive



Pick a color. Any color. And get on the right track.

To anywhere in Western Europe

Only 95 agorot per minute! (including VAT)

To the U.S. and Canada

Only 69 agorot per minute! (including VAT)

To Eastern Europe

Only 139 agorot per minute! (including VAT)

3-to-1: The Winning Track. Golden Lines' winning formula has left the gate. Pick your plan: The Blue Line to the U.S. and Canada. The Yellow Line to Western Europe. The Red Line to Eastern Europe. You'll enjoy the best rates all day, all night, all through the week. Subscribing to Golden Lines is absolutely free - no registration fee and no monthly service charge. Rates will remain in effect unconditionally until 31 October 1997. Subscribers with monthly international calling charges of at least NIS 25 (including VAT) will continue to benefit from the same low rates until April 1998.

How do you get on the right track? If you're a Golden Lines subscriber, just dial 1828, pick your plan, and keep smiling. If you haven't subscribed yet, call now to sign up, pick your plan, and join thousands of satisfied customers who have something to smile about.

For more details or to subscribe, please call: 1-800-012-012, or dial 1828 if you are already a subscriber.



GOLDEN LINES

LEADING THE NEW ERA IN INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN ISRAEL

Winning cards

In yesterday's first Chance drawing (275/97), the winning cards were the jack of spades, the nine of hearts, the seven of diamonds and the queen of clubs.

In the second drawing (276/97), the winning cards were the nine of spades, the queen of hearts, the nine of diamonds and the jack of clubs.

NEWSLINE

with Barbara Epstein

Barbara Epstein is director of Community Advocacy/Genesis, a grassroots group that lobbies for social rights and helps people learn of and access entitlements.

Who is entitled to housing assistance?
Every young couple is entitled to a government-supported mortgage. The amount, however, is continuously updated, and now stands at around NIS 70,000. Most low-income families are not able to use this mortgage to buy an apartment, because they don't have additional money of their own, or help from parents to take out an additional mortgage. Because of this, there are a number of supplementary programs that help, depending on the number of points a family accrues. Points are awarded on the basis of the number of children that the couple's parents had, the number of years the family has gone without housing, and how many children are in the family. This is often a Catch-22 situation - the worse the condition you are in, the more help you are entitled to, and so the most mortgage assistance is offered to those who can least afford to take advantage of it.

There is also a very limited supply of public housing for people with very low incomes, and extremely low-rent housing for families with three or more children who earn less than NIS 3,400 shekels a month. They have to be a family or a single parent with three or more children. So as you can see, there are a lot of people who fall between the cracks. The working poor, earning the minimum wage, have no way of getting an apartment.

What about renting?
The Israeli housing market is based on ownership; there is no real rental market. Private housing rentals are rare, the market is very tight and prices are very high. Government rental subsidies, limited to three years, are given to some of the poor, on the premise that at the end of that period, a family will have saved enough to buy a flat. But rents are so high that even with the subsidy there is no way a poor family can save enough for a down payment.

There were media reports that the Mevasseret squatters had nice cars and cellular phones. Some people have implied that they are simply spoiled, insisting on living in the expensive Jerusalem area instead of moving somewhere else.

Just because you can't afford an apartment doesn't mean you can't afford to buy a car. After all, you still need to get to work, to get your children around. As for cellular phones, people without a permanent place to live have to have cellular phones so that people can reach them. I've also heard people claim that it is less costly to keep a cellular phone than a regular line.

As for geography, when you are talking about members of the working poor, extended family support is vital. They often depend on their family for child care, for Shabbat meals, for other kinds of help. It is much easier for any skilled professional to go live in Dimona for a couple of years. A teacher, for example, can go live in the periphery and teach, and then come back to the center of the country once he or she has saved some money. But what are non-professional, non-skilled workers going to do once they've moved to a cheap apartment in Dimona? How many delivery men, how many nannies can find work in Dimona? For most, unless there is a factory job waiting, such a move would simply mean unemployment.

Allison Kaplan Sommer

British attack victim praises police

Charlotte Gibb, the British hitchhiker who was shot and wounded two weeks ago during an attack in which her boyfriend, Jeffrey Hunter, was killed, said she was "incredibly grateful" to the Negev District police for solving the crime.

"I can only explain this by your professionalism. My words are insufficient to express my thanks to you. When I heard the news about the suspect's capture, this was a great relief for me and it will help me get on in life knowing that you have everything under control."

Gibb wrote further that she had tried to help the investigators as much as she could in order to catch the killer. "I know that he didn't just decide to do what he did [on the spur of the moment]. I'm sure of it," she said. (TIM)

Ease your back to...

PM denies...

PM: Jay to spoon water